

The Sun.

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If our friends who favor us with manuscripts for publication wish to have rejected articles returned, they must in all cases send stamps for that purpose.

The Rapid Transit Decision.

In form, the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court has confirmed the report of its Commissioners in favor of the construction by the City of New York of the proposed underground rapid transit railroad; but in substance it postpones the confirmation until, by further litigation, the Court of Appeals shall have decided whether the construction sought will or will not entail upon the city a debt exceeding the constitutional limit.

More than this, the court makes its approval conditional upon the filing by the Rapid Transit Commissioners of a stipulation to require, from the contractors for building the road, a bond with a penalty of not less than \$15,000,000.

It follows, therefore, that nothing can be done in the way of commencing the work until the Court of Appeals affirms its legality, nor until contractors can get a bond for \$15,000,000 more.

This looks more like a defeat of the scheme than a victory for it.

The Republicans Must Sustain the Civil Service Law.

In the course of the debate on the Legislative, Executive and Judicial Appropriation bill, discussion fell upon Republican fidelity to both the letter and the spirit of the Civil Service Law. Congressman BARNETT of Massachusetts referred to a similar discussion of that particular subject in the House seven years ago, and quoted the subjoined remarks made at that time by a Republican member:

"If the Republican party of this country is pledged to any one thing more than another, it is to the maintenance of the Civil Service Law and its efficient execution; not only that, but to its enlargement and further application to the public service. The law as it stands upon our statute books to-day was put there by Republican hands. It is a Republican measure. Every national platform of the Republican party since its enactment has declared not only in favor of its continuance in full vigor, but in favor of its enlargement, as to apply more generally to the public service."

"Who said that?" asked somebody.

"Mr. Chairman," replied Mr. BARNETT, "the utterance was made by WILLIAM McKIM of Ohio."

There is no need to go back so far as that. The last National Convention of the Republican party, held in St. Louis eighteen months ago, adopted this resolution:

"The Civil Service Law was placed on the statute book by the Republican party, which has always sustained it, and we renew our repeated declaration that it shall be thoroughly and honestly enforced and extended wherever practicable."

That declaration renders superfluous all argument at the present time concerning the expediency of maintaining, in letter and in spirit, the Civil Service Law as it stands; or the desirability of extending its operations wherever practicable.

Republicans who may attack it, directly or indirectly, in the Fifty-fifth Congress will lose both their time and their wind. Democrats who may attack it will accomplish nothing. They will have the record of their futile utterances as the only reward for their pains.

All this is independent of any question as to the merits of the competitive system as administered, or of the advisability of retaining it as part of our system. The place and the time to discuss that will be in the National Convention of 1900.

But it is of primary importance that a great party, intrusted with the control of the Government, shall keep its pledges and fulfill its promises.

India Demands Self-Government.

The British Government seems to have awakened to the fact that it has something more to deal with in India than a mere passing wave of discontent. It has been forced to recognize that it has to face a demand on the part of the people of British India for some share in the government of their own country, some voice in the way their taxes shall be raised and expended. At the present moment they have neither one nor the other.

On different occasions, notably in 1858 after the mutiny of the native army had given the British Government the opportunity to assume the direct administration of India, the people of India have been assured by royal proclamation that the sovereign recognized no distinction between her British subjects and her native-born subjects. In the proclamation of Nov. 1, 1858, which the people of India regard as the great charter of their rights, the following special clauses occur:

"We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects, and those obligations, by the blessing of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfill."

"And it is our further will, that so far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability and integrity duly to discharge."

"In their property will be our strength, in their contentment our security, and in their gratitude our best reward; and we give thanks to God, who has made it possible for us to carry out these our wishes for the good of our people."

Nothing could be more explicit than this. It was received in India with public rejoicing, fireworks, illuminations, and the firing of cannon. On the faith of it, thousands of young Indians set to work to qualify themselves for official posts in the administration and government of their country, only to find that all the fine promises of the royal proclamation were illusory, and that, whatever was the intention of its framers, it had been studiously nullified in execution.

Soon after this proclamation was issued a committee was appointed by the Secretary of State for India, composed of five Anglo-Indian members of his own Council. They made their report on Jan. 29, 1860. In it they found that while theoretically there existed no positive disqualification and the natives of India were not excluded from the civil service of India, in practice they were excluded. The difficulties encountered by a native who wants to leave India and reside in England for a time are so great that, as a general rule, it is

almost impossible for a native successfully to compete at the periodical examinations, which are held in England. The committee recommended that in order to remedy this, examinations should be held simultaneously in England and India, identical in their nature, the competitors being finally classified in one list, according to merit, by the Civil Service Commissioners.

This very fair and just solution was rejected, as it would have ended the monopoly that has been enjoyed by British-born subjects for over forty years of employment in the Indian civil service. Its rejection blighted the hopes of the Indian people, and has contributed, along with the spread of education, to rouse them to demand, with a voice described by English reactionaries as "sedition," the fulfillment of the promises successively made by British Governments in 1833 and 1858.

In 1867 the question was brought before the Government of the day in England, and much show was made of considering how native Indians could be admitted to share in the administration of their country, but all instructions issued were thwarted by what Lord Lytton called "subterfuges," and with great ingenuity.

In 1870 a law was passed redefining and confirming the rights of native Indians to employment in the government of their country, but, like the royal promises that had preceded it, it was enacted only to become a dead letter.

What may be the ultimate issue of the struggle now begun in India for only a moderate measure of self-government, is involved in obscurity. The present Government of England has at its head a statesman who, a few years ago, said that the only policy for India was one of drift and blood-letting. But that policy is now abandoned; and it is not Indian blood only that is flowing or Indian money only that is being spent.

The admitted failure of the military expedition against the Afghans to accomplish its object, with the consequent diminution of the British prestige, is itself a material addition to the strength of the Indian demand. British rule has existed in India for a century and a half, and not a promise made to its people by its alien rulers has yet been fulfilled. The overtaxation of the whole people, numbering some 240,000,000, has become so burdensome that it is a question whether the world may not witness one of the most gigantic bankruptcies of history, only in less degree disastrous to the conquered Indians than to their British conquerors.

In 1893, Lord HARTINGTON, now the Duke of Devonshire and a member of the present British Cabinet, warned the British people of the danger of the selfish policy that was being followed in India, and of the effect it would have in exasperating the people against British rule. He is now in a position to make his influence felt, if it is not already too late. Influential Indians in their despair are openly asking each other whether the condition of their country could be worse under Russian rule, and one in particular has gone so far as to warn the English Government that there are features in its Indian administration which Russian emissaries could urge with great plausibility upon the minds of the masses of the Indian people against the English, if ever the Russian Government contemplated disturbing England in India.

The Proper Christmas Gift.

A letter from Brooklyn asks of us a question which, doubtless, is perplexing the minds of many thousands of the readers of THE SUN at this time, when the season for giving gifts is so near at hand. The lines of public transportation are crowded daily even in the hours when usually the lessened demand on their accommodations favors the comfort of the remaining travellers, and a great part, if not the majority, of the women who occupy chiefly the seats and cling to the straps of the cars are loaded down with parcels indubitably containing Christmas gifts.

It is a sight which increases respect for human nature and is altogether touching. We may describe it as an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, using without irreverence the words of the Catechism's definition of a sacrament, for it affords a conspicuous manifestation of the self-sacrificing human affection which is so closely akin to the very essence of religious sentiment. Mr. STREED of London puts New York in the regions under the special rule of Satan, but the great enemy of souls must feel that a dangerous rebellion against his diabolical authority is going on hereabouts in these holiday days.

The letter of inquiry to which we have referred is to this effect:

"TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: I kindly mention a few things, either of which you consider appropriate to offer to a young lady as a holiday gift. I have only been acquainted with the friend about three months. She works where I do, and at a press. One day she accidentally cut her finger so badly as to prevent her from resuming the same work for about five weeks. During that time she had her in my charge in another branch of the business."

"I have received her home almost nightly for six weeks; and have been out with her on several occasions afterward, and am very fond of her company, as you will readily believe."

"About three weeks have elapsed since the death of her sister, to whom she was so closely attached that she seems to imagine that there is little or no joy in life for her."

"If you please respond at once I shall feel greatly obliged to you for your extreme kindness."

"BROOKLYN, Dec. 10."

The multitude of gifts proper for Christmas is endless in variety, and, happily, it includes numerous articles whose prices are within the means of every giver, no matter how light his purse. The cheapness of many really beautiful manufactures is amazing. Our friend, however, it is evident, desires that his gift shall represent and signify in its importance and appropriateness the great depth of his affection and sympathy for the woman of whom he is enamored. Most of all, he wishes that it should touch her heart and reveal to her the richness of his sentiment toward her. But magnitude in the gift is not requisite for that purpose. It is the giving rather than the mere material form of the gift which expresses that feeling. The gift is only the outward and visible sign; the emotion that prompts the giving is the inward and spiritual grace.

Hence it is not of much matter what the gift is, so long as he gives it and she accepts it as a revelation of that spirit. If it is possible for him to discover what she desires particularly, that will be an appropriate gift; but so also will any gift be appropriate, if it is the gold in the wedding ring which makes the matron cherish it through life with an almost superstitious regard, but the marriage it typifies and symbolizes. The veriest trifle may be enriched beyond price by the inward grace of which it is the outward expression. Diamonds and rubies can tell no more of that spiritual sentiment than the cheapest article

else at the bargain counter. The two have no relation. The only value worth consideration is in the feeling.

Great complaint is made of the unequal distribution of the blessings of life, but the organization of the social system does not cause any inequality in the distribution of the greatest blessing of all. Affection is independent of poverty or riches; it bears no relation to material circumstances. Everybody gets of it the full share he deserves, since the blessing is rather in the bestowal of the affection than in the receiving of it.

Accordingly, we do not need to suggest to our inquiring friend any particular gift. Whatever he gives to the girl will be glorified by the affection it symbolizes and to which it appeals.

Japan and Kiao Chou.

The mingling of anxiety and caution which the Mikado's Government shows regarding Germany's seizure of Kiao Chou Bay is suggestive. The inquiries which its representatives at various European courts and at Peking, according to the despatches, have been instructed to make, are as to Germany's chief object in that seizure; whether it is to be temporary or permanent; whether Germany, France, and Russia regard it to be beforehand, and how China regards it.

These inquiries show that Japan not only knows nothing about the move, but is still completely at sea on the subject. Her questions go to the root of the matter, and involve what we all want to know; but they also indicate that she has not been consulted by any other power, and is compelled to make advances in order to obtain elementary information.

There is little doubt that Japan feels keenly the German encroachment in China. It was said, at the close of her great victory over that country, that she was anxious to form a league with her against European aggression; and, however that may have been, it is clear that in Russia's attitude, practically causing her withdrawal from the mainland, and regulating the character of her protectorate in Corea, she recognized that Europe was a long way from any notions of continental aggrandizement.

In the absence of an agreement between China and Japan for mutual support, the capacity of the Celestial Kingdom for blundering is enormous; that Japan would hesitate to link her destiny with that of her neighbor, Japan's future points to growth and greatness, while China may any day be broken to pieces. Not only China's military and naval weakness, but also her fatal habit of procrastination exposes her to constant peril. Japan wisely refrains from standing by her now until after sounding the European powers as to what they think and will do.

This policy, also, avoids the danger of a rebuff which Japan might get should she protest on her individual account against Germany's conduct. Such a step in the dark might be a severe blow to her slowly growing prestige. Japan has too lately come out of the list of negligible nations for very positive self-esteem. She is steadily growing into a power that must be reckoned with in international affairs, but she knows the risk of presumption.

Meanwhile she becomes spokesman for the rest of the world in regard to what we all want to know. If the answers to the questions which her Foreign Minister is reported to have drawn up, are frank and prompt, and are made public, all needed light can be thrown on ways now dark at Kiao Chou.

The "Sneer" of the Speaker.

An anecdote concerning Speaker RICE, printed the other day in the *Providence Journal*, represented him as saying that the fact that a certain bill had passed the Senate without a dissenting voice was "the very best reason why it should not pass the House."

Our esteemed contemporary, the *Boston Herald*, regards this remark as of serious importance, and it rebukes the Speaker for what it calls "his reported sneer at the Senate."

It is Mr. RICE's fortune or misfortune to be credited with many utterances of which he is entirely innocent. Like other statesmen who have fairly won a reputation for incisive wit and chain-lightning repartee, he has become in his turn a convenient book on which to hang all sorts of pleasant, both modern and ancient. He can only suffer and be silent.

Perhaps he never said it. He did not mean it in any sense disrespectful to the Senate. A body bound to its own House by living flesh, even as CHASE was bound to ENG, the Speaker is a philosopher, even before he is a wit. It is not true that a measure which entirely escaped scrutiny in one of two coordinate legislative bodies, ought for that reason, first of all reasons, to be regarded attentively by the other?

The Bicycle Nose.

It would be unfair to medical science and to mankind at large if the year were allowed to end without proper attention to the latest affliction said to be caused by bicycling. A recent number of the *British Medical Journal* contains this statement by a physician:

"As a considerable majority of the patients who have lately consulted me for nasal trouble have complained of a peculiar obstruction, and some of them have taken to the bicycle, the question arises: Are we to place this otherwise healthy and almost necessary mode of locomotion among the causes of nasal disease? It is quite conceivable that the quick rush through the air, inhaling large quantities of dust on the country roads, and all sorts and conditions of dirt on the London ones, might cause considerable irritation to the nasal mucous membrane."

So it appears that John Bull has got a "bicycle nose," and also that the peculiar, overstrained countenance known as the "bicycle face" has again been subdivided. The doctor has failed to tell us whether the bicycle nose is peculiar to any one class of wheelmen, but, inasmuch as it is supposed to be produced by "a quick rush through the air," it is doubtless mainly characteristic of the scorcher. Therefore, the bicycle face, so far as it distinguishes that loose-jointed individual, now embodies four distinct features, namely, the bicycle nose, the bicycle eyes, the bicycle ears, and the bicycle jaw.

Perhaps the differentiation of the bicycle nose is not altogether surprising in view of some other developments reported from over the sea. Only a short time ago Dr. DESTOR, in an account of his cycling adventures published in the *Gazette des Hopitaux*, declared that "after a long ride he experienced parosmia in the fourth and fifth fingers. With impaired sensibility, and paresthesia in the interosseal, lumbrical, and adductor pollicis," and that "this paresthesia was followed by distinct atrophy in the affected muscles."

There is no reason to suppose, however, that there is anything so serious about the

bicycle nose as is to be found in the alarming condition of Dr. DESTOR. In this country the scorcher had a merry time of it before the days of bicycle policemen, yet he never developed anything worse than the "monkey back" and the "ostrich neck." The only sort of bicycle nose to be found over here is the "nose for business" possessed by the American wheelmakers. That peculiarity has its home here, and to its rapid growth in the past two years is due the fact that the American bicycle is almost as popular in Europe and Australia as it is in the United States.

The bicycle nose that affects the nasal membrane is a total stranger to us. So is "parosmia in the interosseal, lumbrical, and adductor pollicis." If they should ever visit the Greater New York they will be promptly and pitilessly handed over to the proper authorities.

A Silly Piece of Impudence.

With comical assurance the little clique engaged in the effort to divide the Republican party in this city and State demand that they be represented in the appointments of Republican Commissioners in the new Police Board. Section 270 of the Greater New York charter provides that of the four members of that board "no more than two" shall belong to the same political party or be of the same opinion on State and national politics.

The disorganizing clique make their demand on the pretence that they are the representatives of the majority of the Republicans of the city, and that the genuine Republican organization "does not represent the Republican party." But who made them the representatives of anybody except themselves, Republicans or otherwise? They are self-appointed only; any other little coterie of individual Republicans would have as much right as they to assume to be the Republican party.

The Citizens' Union movement, in which these would-be mischief-makers took part, expressly disavowed political partisanship. It had no party color whatever, according to its pretensions, but denounced the introduction of "opinions on State and national politics" into a municipal contest as a grievous moral and political sin. It was made up of Democrats, Mugwumps, and Republicans, and it nominated a ticket without any authority entitling it to representation in the city. It is a silly piece of impudence.

It represented the Republican party no more than the Democratic party, and neither of them, save in the volunteer support of individual Republicans and Democrats independently of their partisan "opinions on State and national politics." Its nominations were made by a self-appointed committee of Democrats, Mugwumps, and Republicans.

Mayor VAN WYCK, therefore, would be as much justified in yielding to a demand from the Citizens' Union people to appoint Democratic Police Commissioners of their selection as to pay any heed to the resolutions passed on Thursday evening that these bolters should have the Republican representation in the bi-partisan Police Board. The resolutions are simply a silly piece of impudence.

Park or Gymnasium?

The project of certain well meaning persons to turn the East River Park, above Eighty-sixth street, into a gymnasium is a plan of perversion, not of improvement.

There is other park territory available for the use which the promoters of athletic joys have in view; but the ground they want at the riverside is too valuable for other and at least equally important purposes to be so appropriated.

Let them look elsewhere. As well might the Riverside Park, on the other side of the island, be converted into a sort of Elysian Fields or Olympia.

Chief Justice Marshall on the Constitutionality of Annexation.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: Noting your convincing answer in today's SUN to the assertion that annexation of territory is unconstitutional, I beg leave to call your attention to the decision of the United States Supreme Court rendered in 1818, in the case of the American Insurance Company vs. Canter (1 Peters, 511), in which Chief Justice Marshall, in delivering the unanimous opinion of the court, said:

"The Constitution confers absolutely on the Government of the Union the powers of making war and of making treaties; consequently, that Government possesses the power of acquiring territory either by conquest or by treaty."

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most everybody would prefer to die than not; not that the eater of them would have any remarkable chances of surviving. Thus he has gradually inculcated into the breasts of those who know his economical cooking a distaste for all cooking and all eating. At any rate they will have a great deal of food and come perilously near starvation rather than eat his food. So, in a way unexpected, he must be adding greatly to the world's savings; and, if the use of his oven were general, the savings of money would be enormous, somewhat approaching the terrible loss of life.

What new pair of plump breeches is dazzling the eyes of the Hon. JAKE REIN just now? Some new plump creation has fastened his covetous gaze, unless all signs fail.

The *Kansas City Times* remarks that Governor LEEDY of Kansas and Governor HOLCOMB of Nebraska "have similar records." This seems unjust to the former of these eminent Populists. He is now scattering jack rabbits, or promising to scatter them, among the poor and hungry plutocrats of the East. Governor HOLCOMB is known to have been at one time a mortgagee, a money lender, and consequently a master of objectionable financial operations. A man who lends money or has money enough to lend is known in good Populist company in Kansas and Nebraska as a usurer and a money shark. No doubt the Hon. SILAS HOLCOMB has long repented of his error, but no amount of repentance can place him on that lofty plane occupied by the Hon. JOHN W. LEEDY, jack rabbit distributor.

THE EAST RIVER PARK.

A Project to Destroy Its Beauty and Charm and Interfere with Its Proper Use.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: I see by the daily papers that at the last meeting of the Park Commissioners several associations for the amelioration of the condition of the poor and for the promotion of athletics have applied for the use of the level portion of East River Park, north of Eighty-sixth street, as an open-air gymnasium.

The tract referred to, as I understand, lies just north of the conclusion of the East River Park, and consists of a level piece of greenland dotted with large shade trees of considerable age. From this point of vantage the best views of the river are obtained—north, east and south. On this territory the benevolent societies propose to construct a running track, a place for games, swings and all the paraphernalia of an open-air gymnasium. A high fence must necessarily be erected around this tract in order to keep out the children who cannot be accommodated within, as well as to protect the little girls who are to use the gymnasium every other day.

I do not respectfully protest against the use of East River Park in any such manner as above described, and I do it in full cognizance of the great value of the benevolent work proposed; and its entire practicability as shown by the success of the open-air gymnasium in Boston on Charles River. East River Park is a park of view, of shaded banks and of the pleasures of women, little children, and men gather to rest and enjoy the cool of the evening or early morning and the charm of the surrounding landscape. Baby carriages and mothers abound more here than in any other park of similar size in the city. It is a place of quiet and quiet enjoyment above everything else, and it is for this reason that people, who have been accustomed to occupy this place, will be disturbed by the proposed change.

On the other hand, there are park territories elsewhere that are unimproved, have no shade trees, and are a waste of land. There is a large tract of land in the city, near the East River, which is a waste of land. It is a place of quiet and quiet enjoyment above everything else, and it is for this reason that people, who have been accustomed to occupy this place, will be disturbed by the proposed change.

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